

A study of the awareness of the Muslim people towards pulse polio immunization in West Bengal.

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ABSTRACT

To eradicate poliomyelitis by the end of 2000 Indian government launched the pulse polio immunisation programme in 1995. But in 2009, 733 children were reported with poliomyelitis. Again In 2012 Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria, were countries where poliomyelitis remained. According to World Health Organisation (2013). If these three countries will not be free from polio, it could be resulted 200, 000 new polio cases every year in all over the world within 10 years. Pulse Polio cell, New Delhi identified few major obstacles such as lack of awareness about pulse polio immunisation and poliomyelitis, myth and misconceptions regarding polio vaccine and concern about its ill effects.

Present Study aims to identity the awareness of the target population about polio and pulse polio immunisation and to measure their practice towards pulse polio immunisation.

Keywords: Poliomyelitis, pulse polio Immunisation (PPI), Awareness.

Introduction:

In India among children exhaustive and extensive search for WPV has proved negative since January 13, 2011. After that World Health Organisation removed India from the list of 'Polio endemic' countries on 25th February 2012. But the Polio disease was non-eradicable due to low standards hygiene and sanitation or due to use of oral polio vaccine (OPV) or polio which was a low priority disease and most probable negative attitude and awareness towards Polio.

Hundred percent eradication of Poliomyelitis is zero transmission of not only WPVs but also polio virus vaccine so the first phase of polio eradication is to use oral polio vaccine (OPV) for wild poliovirus and the second phase is the elimination of vaccine poliovirus using IPV (inactivated poliovirus vaccine). Recently in India this concept has originated and also World Health Organisation (WHO) has endorsed it.

True polio eradication needs the awareness of the people of our society. But in Indian society there is a lot of difference in religious faith among the people. Especially the rumours about vaccination have created many problems opposition in Muslims; these situations are creating tough time for workers who are working in this programme.

Maulana the clerics of Islam explained that there is no explanation of vaccination in Islam and they believed that those who die from Poliomyelitis will be martyrs and also claimed that the Polio vaccines are infidel. Again there is a faith that the Western Country is attempted to infertile females and males for reducing the population of Muslims by using polio vaccine. In recently parents of Muslim children are refusing polio drops because they are demanding other health facilities free of cost with pulse polio immunisation.

Although, officially India is polio free, but history of the disease says that it can raise its ugly face at any time. Worldwide Muslim community opposes polio immunisation programme .Generally illiterate Muslim people are behind this strong opposition.

Being dangerous and highly infections and communicable, the poliovirus does not remain confined only among the Muslims Community, it infects other also. In this perspective the researcher can say that there is strong need to know the Knowledge and awareness levels of the Muslim community regarding polio disease. There is strong need to increase the awareness level towards polio among Muslim community in India.

Materials and Methods:

Muslim houses containing children under five years old were included for this research. 300 households were taken as sample.

Data was collected by interviewing members aged above 18 years of household using a pretested, semi structured questionnaire after taking their informed consent.

Responses given by participants through questionnaire are assigned points which help to categorisation of the level of awareness of the participants into well, moderately and poorly.

Chi-square test used for testing significant and P value <0.05 considered as significant.

Results :

Table 1 : Awareness about Poliomyelitis

Features	No (%)
Know about Polio	
Yes	300 (100)
NO	0 (0)
Risk zone groups	
Children <5 years	234 (78%)
Adults(6 – 20)	20 (6.7%)
Cannot say	56 (15.3%)
Symptoms of Polio	
Paralysis	189 (63%)
Fever	33 (11%)
Others	75 (25%)
Cannot say	3 (1%)
Transmission Mode	
Contaminated food and water	33 (11%)
Mosquitoes or fly	15 (5%)
Cannot say	252(84%)
Disease Preventable	
Yes	270 (90%)
No	12 (4%)
Cannot say	18(6%)
Disease curable	
Yes	81(27%)
No	195(65%)
Cannot say	24(8%)

So from the above table it can be said that all the Muslim participants aware the name of Poliomyelitis and 78% of participants know that poliomyelitis attack the children below 5 years of old. Again 63% of the participant has the knowledge about paralysis caused by Poliomyelitis. It is very disappointing that only 33% of the participant know that Poliomyelitis contaminates through food and water. 12% of the Muslim participants believe that the Poliomyelitis is not preventable disease. Somehow this information is a matter of worry around India as well as World. Again 27% were under the misconception that it is curable (Tables 1).

Table 2: Awareness of participants about pulse Polio immunisation

Characteristics	No (%)
Know the word Pulse Polio	
Yes	300 (100%)
NO	0 (0 %)
Source of Information about PPI	
TV	180 (60%)
Newspapers	66 (22%)
Radio	33 (11%)
Health Workers	21 (7%)
Target group	
0-5 years	225(75%)
1-5 years	27(9%)
5-10 years	15(5%)
Cannot say	33(11%)

PPI is given	
Every month	6 (2%)
March to October	90(30%)
November to February	204(68%)
Purpose of Pulse Polio	
Polio eradication	267(89%)
Cannot say	33(11%)
Repeated vaccination can Causes over dosage	
Yes	90(3%)
No	258(86%)
Cannot say	33(11%)
Polio drops during illness	
Yes	123(41%)
No	117(39%)
Cannot say	60(20%)

From the above table it can be concluded that all the Muslim participants had heard about Pulse Polio immunisation. 60% of the participants had known about PPI from Television. 75% Muslim participant answered correctly that the target age group are 0 – 5 years for PPI. One of the disappointing responses that the purpose of PPI being to eradicate Polio is known by 89% of the participant. 11% is totally unaware about PPI. 3% of the participant has the misconception that repeated vaccination under Pulse Polio immunisation leads to over dosage and is thus harmful to children. Only 41% Muslim participants knew that Polio drops can be given 0 – 5 years old children even if they are ill at the time of vaccination.

Table 3: Educational status of the participants and their awareness level about PPI.

Educational status	Poorly aware	Moderately aware	Well aware	Total
Illiterate	70	20	0	90
Primary (I - IV)	25	45	35	105
Secondary (V - X)	5	10	37	52
Higher Secondary	4	30	11	45
Graduation	0	5	3	8
Total	104 (34.66%)	110 (36.66%)	86 (28.66%)	300

Awareness scores of participants showed that poorly aware were 104 (34.66%), 110 (36.66%) were moderately aware and 86 (28.66%) were well aware of Pulse polio immunisation and Poliomyelitis and this was significantly associated with the level of education Chi square (8, N =300) = 150.72, P < 0.05).

Discussion:

Singh et al showed that 70.3% of the participants knew that Poliomyelitis leads to paralysis and 82.2% participant aware that Polio is preventable by vaccination. A study done by Misra et.al showed 30.7% of respondents knew that polio is curable disease. In the study of Bhasin et al 75% of the participants knew the target group correctly.

In this study only 9% believed that repeated vaccination under PPI results in over dosage In the study of Dobe et al 2.2- 6.3% participants did not vaccinate their children due to the fear of over dosage.

Again from the awareness score of the participants it would be said that Educational status was found to be significantly associated with level of awareness about Polio and PPI programme. In the study of Chincholikar et al and Rasania et al similar findings or significant association has been found. From the above discussion it can be concluded that the findings of this research is more or less relevant to the other findings.

Conclusion:

In this study the awareness level of Muslim people in West Bengal is unsatisfactory with respect to the disease and PPI. Very few Muslim people know that Poliomyelitis is transmitted and contaminated through food and water. Misconception such as polio is curable disease, can prevent other disease are the dangerous issues which are matter of worry and 34.66% of Muslim participants are poorly aware among 23.3% of Muslim people are illiterate. This is also a dangerous areas and barriers to eradicate polio viruses

completely. Interpersonal communication, focus group discussion with medical officer , local leaders , representatives from women self-help groups., increase literary rate and awareness level will improve the acceptance of Pulse polio immunisation and enhance the possibility of Poliomyelitis eradication from India.

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